
ADRIATIC SEA PARTNERSHIP

First Partnership Meeting

Sarajevo, 3 April 2007

DRAFT

Report of the meeting

Participating partners: MAP Office Bosnia and Herzegovina; Italian Ministry for Environment, Land and Sea; Ministry of Tourism and the Environment, Montenegro; Slovenian Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning; INGV (ADRICOSM); IUCN; REC.

Participating observers: Federal Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Bosnia and Herzegovina; Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations, Bosnia and Herzegovina; Ministry of the Sea, Tourism, Transport and Development, Croatia; Ministry of Environmental Protection, Physical Planning and Construction, Croatia; PAP/RAC.

Item 1: Jasna Draganic of REC Country Office Bosnia-Herzegovina, Senad Oprasic of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of BiH, and Marta Szigeti Bonifert of the REC Head Office opened the meeting. Mitja Bricelj of Slovenia was elected to serve as chair of the meeting and Marijana Mance of Croatia as co-chair. The Agenda was adopted.

Item 2: A presentation on partnerships was delivered by Stephen Stec of the REC. The presentation described various options for organizing partnerships with varying degrees of formality, and presented the functions and flexible nature of partnerships. Participants agreed to separate organizational and technical issues and to establish two separate working groups to deal with these issues respectively. Participants noted with interest the two options for defining partnerships highlighted in the presentation: a partnership document or a memorandum of understanding

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Item 3:

3.1. Participants discussed the potential role of the ASP as an extra effort of the partners to implement existing undertakings and to meet the goals and obligations already established for the Adriatic. However, it was noted that “sovereign countries are those who are responsible for the implementation of the undertaken international commitments and this is their obligation only, so ASP is not a forum that can implement the international commitments.”

It was agreed that the Partnership should avoid duplication of efforts and of commitments already undertaken. Efforts are being made to create links with the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative (AII) and the same can be done with other forums.

3.2. While certain frameworks and policy instruments exist, there is a need for gaps to be identified and activities to be speeded up in the implementation process. In the opinion of many participants, implementation is weak or lacking. Although there was a division of opinion, most participants agreed that the focus of the meeting was to identify what might help countries to be more efficient in managing implementation, and how priorities can be determined by identifying which concrete activities are working and which are missing. .

3.3. Participants discussed how to define the value added of the ASP and the Partnership’s potential to provide continuous progress monitoring and a permanent contact point. The ASP might serve as an inter-sessional working body, reporting to the meetings of the Trilateral Commission, the AII and other existing bodies, on progress made on agenda items under discussion by these bodies. Some participants stressed that there might be a need to have a discussion on new intergovernmental arrangements, which would require the involvement of ministries of foreign affairs.

3.4. The Partnership’s objectives have to be achievable in terms of financial resources: the suggestion was made that section 5 of the ASP Concept document could be used as a basis for reflection on potential assistance mechanisms to support the Partnership.

Item 4:

4.1. Participants discussed in general terms the questions presented for discussion prior to the meeting (see attached) regarding the operationalization of the Partnership. It was mentioned that other sectoral ministries will have to be involved in the Partnership, as well as foreign affairs ministries, if the Partnership takes a particular form.

4.2. Based on the feedback from the countries, steps could be taken to develop the content of an Action Plan and its priorities could be identified. The initial discussion was on the focus of the ASP, including 3 projects under the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development and the EU Marine Strategy. The proposal was made to

concentrate on concrete solutions and steps for moving forward on common projects, and on how to improve the management of commitments. The need now is to talk about where to start and to identify specific projects for action. The Partnership could potentially help in the preparation of project proposals for EU and other financing. Such proposals would need to be worded in terms of the mechanisms available for funding, and would have to address issues of importance for the entire subregion rather than individual countries. Expert organizations could be invited to contribute with their expertise in the development and management of common projects for the Adriatic.

4.3. A fundamental principle of the Partnership should be visibility. An important step forward would be an exchange of information from countries and partners as to what their capacities are and the available expertise. In this respect, Croatia made reference to its presentation of its national experiences at the Postojna meeting. An email list should be set up for partners to circulate this information. Exchanges through the Partnership could lead to the identification of needs, and to offers, project proposals and capacity building with national authorities: that is, to concrete steps to action. A website, properly managed and updated, is an ideal tool for this purpose.

4.4. The meeting agreed that there needs to be a gap analysis for content as well as a legal gap analysis, taking into account already existing initiatives and international agreements such as the Trilateral Commission and the AII. The legal gap analysis could consider at least three alternatives: the status quo where the ASP fills gaps through inter-sessional activities; a new international agreement on the Adriatic; or the modification of the Trilateral Commission or other existing initiatives in order to meet the requirements of the whole Adriatic. The meeting requested the REC to develop the two gap analyses for the content and legal basis of the Partnership, including examples of good practice. The gap analyses should be coordinated with the MAP Secretariat. The two gap analyses should correspond to the legal and technical working groups that should work closely together. The participants agreed to nominate or identify contact persons for the two gap analyses. The meeting agreed that the REC should continue to fulfil the role of ASP interim secretariat.

Item 5:

5.1. Croatia distributed a new draft of the category 2 paper for the Belgrade Conference. Participants were invited to send written comments to Croatia on the paper “Towards a Healthy and Productive Adriatic Ecosystem” prepared by Professor Smodlaka, by 20 April. Contributions to the “second part” of the paper – that is, the part of the paper describing political cooperation– were also invited. The draft of the second part of the document will be sent by Croatia. All contributions will be taken into account in the preparation of the paper. The REC will facilitate the development of the second part of the document by providing input.

5.2. The meeting concluded that the Adriatic Sea background paper belongs under the SEE component of the Belgrade Conference agenda, rather than the partnerships component.

5.3. The REC acting as ASP Secretariat was asked to contact the MAP Secretariat to understand their plans for the Belgrade “Environment for Europe” conference. On behalf of the ASP, the REC as secretariat will consider the option of registering for a Side Event by the May 1 deadline, on the basis of discussions with MAP.

Item 6: The meeting acknowledged the financial support provided by Italy and Slovenia for the launch of the ASP. The Sava example shows that the support of the international community will be attracted once the countries demonstrate ownership of and commitment to the initiative. Participation at, and contributions to, the meeting, as well as the commitment of the countries to nominate contact persons, can already be seen as an expression of commitment to the Partnership.

Item 7: Attention was drawn to the following important dates:

22 April	Earth Day	
1 May	Deadline for registration of Side Events for Belgrade Conference	
May	Working Group of Senior Officials	Geneva
7-11 May	REMPEC Focal Points Meeting	Malta
30-31 May	Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development (REC CO prepared to make a statement on this issue)	Istanbul
June 1	First Meeting of the Parties of the International Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin	
June 15	Meeting of the Trilateral Commission	Trieste
June	AI Council meeting	Sarajevo
June (tentative)	Integrated Coastal Zone Management Protocol drafting session (PAP/RAC)	

	will be sending invitations)	
2-3 July	MAP Bureau Meeting	Madrid
10-12 October	Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference	Belgrade
16-19 October	MAP Focal Points Meeting	Madrid
10-13 December	Conference of Parties of MAP	Almeria, Spain

Item 9: Next Steps -- [By agreement of the meeting, due to the early departure of some participants, the agenda item on presentation by ASP partners (Item 8) was delayed until after the discussion of Item 9 on Next Steps.]

9.1. The legal and content gap analyses will be used as the basis for clarification of the relationship of the ASP with other initiatives. The REC will check available resources for future activities. Further meetings of the ASP should be planned back to back with other meetings to save costs.

9.2. Contact persons for each working group will be nominated from each country (deadline: 27 April).

9.3. Pending confirmation of available resources, the first draft of the analyses will be circulated by the first week of May (5th)

9.4. Partners should submit their comments on the drafts by May 19 (with possible meetings and discussions).

9.5. REC will integrate comments and prepare final drafts of the analyses by June 1.

9.6. The meeting took note of the request from REMPEC for the REMPEC Focal Points of the Adriatic countries formally to request that REMPEC join the ASP, which, upon approval by the full body of REMPEC Focal Points, could be established on the basis of an MoU between REMPEC and the ASP Secretariat. This highlighted the need for the mandate of the ASP Secretariat to be defined and for the ASP's relationship to the Barcelona Convention to be clarified in order to ensure the commitment of the RACs.

9.7. Croatia drew the attention of the meeting to the negotiations on the ICZM protocol and invited countries to contribute and cooperate in finalizing these negotiations so as to have the protocol prepared for submission to the Barcelona Convention contracting parties meeting in December 2007.



9.8. Countries and organizational partners will be invited to provide information to the Secretariat on the capacities, capabilities and expertise of in-country resources for the purposes of information exchange. This information will be placed on the ASP website.

9.9. These conclusions will be circulated to the participants and to the representatives at the AII Environmental Round Table for approval before submission to the AII Council.

Item 8: The participants were treated to a presentation by the representative of the ADRICOSM partnership on the substantial achievements of this partnership to date and its potential for future work.

Item 10: The meeting was concluded by the co-chair, Marijana Mance, and the representatives of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the REC.